

opened. I got the groceries I needed, and then had to stand in line for 45 minutes. I got back home and told my family, 'I think I've found me something to do. What this town needs is a good supermarket.'"

The idea was sound. Grundy did, indeed, need a good supermarket. The question was how Jack could pull it off.

He talked with his father, Curtis Smith, a successful local businessman; his uncle Earl Smith, who was Buchanan County treasurer; and his cousin Ernest and they agreed that opening a modern supermarket in Grundy made a lot of sense from a business standpoint.

Earl Smith put up some land he owned as his part of the deal and the other three agreed to borrow \$60,000 each to match the value of the land. Thus the original four stockholders of the budding grocery business were Jack Smith, his father, Curtis; his uncle, Earl Smith; and his cousin, Ernest.

"So, here I am, 29 years old. I don't know a thing about the grocery business and we've all borrowed money to open a supermarket that I don't know a thing about running," Jack says.

"Course, Ernest was thinking all the time," Jack continues. "He's heard of a company called Piggly Wiggly because there were Piggly Wiggly stores all around southwest Virginia. So he contacted the Piggly Wiggly Corporation while we started ground preparation on our store site. In a few days two representatives from Piggly Wiggly, field representative George Fox and Tommy Thompson, vice president in charge of the Piggly Wiggly factory that made store fixtures, came to Grundy and we showed them what we had in mind."

"They said, 'This looks good. It looks real good. Now what we need is to have you fellows come down to our factory in Jackson, Tennessee and we'll design you a store.'"

The partners quickly hammered out a franchise agreement with Piggly Wiggly and the grocery chain's design division laid out the new supermarket and supplied the fixtures. "Our fixtures were a little different," Jack recalls. "Everyone else had white in those days but ours were color coded for different departments. I had the most beautiful store anybody ever saw."

The Grundy Piggly Wiggly, with 8,800 square feet of space, opened for business on November 17, 1955. It was located on Route 83 North.

Although he had never dreamed of becoming a grocer, Jack Smith was now in the grocery business, an enterprise that would consume his energies for the next half century.

Mr. Speaker, KVAT Food Stores, Inc. will soon be opening its 92nd store in Vansant, Virginia. The date of the opening will be November 17, 2005, 50 years to the day of the opening of its store in Grundy. With 92 stores in Southeast Kentucky, Southwest Virginia, and Northeast Tennessee, the KVAT stores, operating under the name Food City, are pillars of their local communities. In addition, their success has been shared back with the communities they serve. Food City is well known with its programs like Apples for the Students, in which the company has donated over seven million dollars in equipment to schools in their three state service region. In addition, Food City also partners with farmers in Southwest VA and Northeast TN to bring local produce to its customers which helps local farmers and satisfies customer demand.

Finally, Food City shares its success with its employees. In fact, the company now has 16 percent of its ownership held by its associates, a number expected to continually rise with its profit sharing plans.

KVAT and Food City deserve recognition at their 50 years of service and success, and I know that the congressional delegation of this region join me in honoring the vision of Jack Smith and celebrating all of those who have worked so hard to see its success over the last 50 years.

IN MEMORIAM OF ROBERT HANSON, LAST "MEMPHIS BELLE" CREW MEMBER

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 18, 2005

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the passing of Sergeant Robert J. Hanson, the last surviving crew member of the famed *Memphis Belle* B-17 that flew combat missions during World War II. Mr. Hanson was a man of character, capacity, compassion and courage. We are all saddened by his loss.

Robert was born in Walla Walla, WA, joined the military in 1941, and was assigned to the crew of the *Memphis Belle*.

Early in World War II, the United States 8th Air Force decided to use its heavy bombers in daytime attacks against occupied Europe. The British predicted horrible losses during daylight raids. It was not surprising that the first bomber crew to complete 25 missions would be regarded as heroes.

The crew of the *Memphis Belle* was the first to complete a combat tour. Between November 7, 1942 and May 17, 1943, the crew flew missions ranging from 4 to almost 10 hours in duration. For these missions Robert Hanson and his fellow airmen were awarded the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross. The *Memphis Belle* and its crew were then returned to the United States on a morale-building tour of aircraft plants.

Sergeant Hanson served as the radio operator on the *Memphis Belle*. He put the name of his sweetheart, Irene, next to the window where he sat just in case someone needed to know who to contact if he died in combat.

During its missions, the *Memphis Belle* was hit by flak, cannon shells and machine gun bullets. The plane's major parts were replaced at least once, and four crew members died during combat.

Sergeant Hanson himself narrowly escaped serious injury or even death. He was writing in a log book one day and had to sneeze. As his head moved, a bullet missed him and put a hole through the book.

He regaled family and friends with his experiences about a chase involving several German planes, the bomber's tail being shot off and a nose dive that left the crew wondering if they should use their parachutes.

Upon leaving the service, he went on to work as a salesman for Nalley Fine Foods in Walla Walla, WA, and became a regional manager. He later worked for a candy company in Spokane, Wash. He and Irene recently moved to Albuquerque, NM, to be near their daughter.

In his later years, he enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren, and when he was able, he toured the country speaking about his experiences aboard the *Memphis Belle*.

Sergeant Hanson was a loving husband and father and a loyal friend. I extend my deepest sympathy during this time of bereavement to his wife of 63 years, Irene; his daughter, Mary Black; his son, Rick Hanson; and his six grandchildren.

Not only was Robert Hanson part of our Greatest Generation, he was a true hero, aptly defined as one who inspires through manners and actions, who leads through personal example and accomplishments requiring bravery, skill, and determination.

Mr. Speaker, when radio operators signed off using Morse code, they keyed Dit-Dit-Dit-Dah-Dit-Dah. And, Robert was fond of ending his phone conversations in this way. In honor to him, I ask my colleagues to rise with me and say Dit-Dit-Dit-Dah-Dit-Dah.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 18, 2005

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, October 17, I was unavoidably detained in Kentucky and was not present for rollcall votes No. 521, 522 and 523. The votes were on approving the Journal, and House Resolutions 457 and 491. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all measures.

HONORING NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 18, 2005

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor National Hispanic Heritage Month. Our nation's greatest strength is its heritage of diversity and this month is a tribute to the more than 35 million Americans who identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino and the many millions who came before them. We thank them for their contributions to America, from protecting the nation from its enemies, to representing it abroad and strengthening it from within.

Hispanic Americans have flourished in every field, from politics to business to academia to entertainment. From the first Hispanic U.S. Congressman in 1822 to David Farragut, the first four-star Navy Admiral and famed Civil War leader, Hispanic Americans have played an integral part of our nation's history at every turn.

That history of service and patriotism continues today with the more than 200,000 Hispanics currently in the Armed Services. We thank them, for every time they don the uniform they do it with honor. They have fought proudly and bravely and 41 men of Hispanic heritage have been honored with the Congressional Medal of Honor. There are countless more that go unthanked. They face danger every day in our streets and in our homes as first responders; as policemen, as firemen and as paramedics.

I was proud to join the Immigration Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee earlier this year. I will continue to fight for the